Students Duel With Specter At Penn Talk

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District Attorney Arlen Specter sat on a bench yesterday but he was really on the carpet.

For an hour, he dueled with his audience. There were 65 or so, lounging in the lounge in the Christian Association Building at the University of Pennsylvania.

They were long-haired, bearded, dungareed, attentive — but argumentative.

Ripon Society Sponsor

Sponsor was the Ripon Society. Robert Moss, president, introduced the DA thusly:

"Arlen is typical of the kind of Republican Ripon supports. He's not the type who come out of the Nixon-Agnew office."

This caught the liberals' fancy. Not Specter's, however. He said:

"I don't agree with Bob (his former administrative assistant) on Nixon . . . and I won't comment on his remarks about Agnew."

After Specter presented a concise report on the operations and problems of his office, he asked for questions. This was his first mistake.

A bearded student asked an involved question about Specter's role in the investigation of President John F. Kennedy's assassination. It was more a charge than a question, an accusation that Specter had not followed through in his interrogation of the doctor who performed the autopsy, a hint of hanky-panky involving the burning of the doctor's initial report.

this is me — though I'm not bearded

More Questions?

The DA recognized his tormentor, then asked whether there were more questions.

"Ah, come on, answer him," shouted others.

Specter explained that he had on several previous occasions. When the questions were posed to him by someone else, Specter went into detail about the autopsy.

More questions. More arguments. When the DA protested he did not know the ins and outs of another case, a young man said:

"Just to get an element of truth here, why don't you admit you know about the case?"

"You're giving my powers of recollection a lot more credit than they're entitled to," Specter said. "The case occurred more than two years ago. And, if you don't believe me, I couldn't care less."

In a reference to Specter's confrontation Wednesday with a crowd of protesters at City Hall over the shooting of a retarded young man by a policeman, a youth told the guest speaker:

"That is what I call the arrogance of power, lecturing those people on their choice of language. Your job is not grammarian of City Hall."

Mayoralty Race

Naturally, the Q & A got around to the mayoralty race. To a series of questions, Specter replied:

"President Nixon hasn't asked me to run (as some rumors have it). In fact, no one in Washington has. I'm not going to run. I won't run. I'm definitely not going to enter the race."

Then one young lady asked:

"Are you disappointed that no one in Washington has asked you to run?"

The crowd roared. Specter said "No" And the chips fell off all shoulders.

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